

A LETTER

TO

SIR FRANCIS MILMAN, Bart. M.D.

President of the Royal College of Physicians of London.

&c. &c. &c.

Price Half-a-Crown.

A LETTER

TO

SIR FRANCIS MILMAN, Bart. M.D.

President of the Royal College of Physicians of London,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

THE PROPOSED REFORM

IN THE CONDITION OF

The Apothecary and Surgeon-Apothecary.

WITH AN APPENDIX:

CONTAINING

THE CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

AND THE

THREE CORPORATE MEDICAL BODIES.

By One of the Committee.

“Homines enim ad Deos nulla re propius accedunt, quam salutem hominibus dando.”

CICERO.

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To Sir Francis Milman, Bart. M. D.

&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

You are not unacquainted, even in your official capacity, with the reform, which the APOTHECARIES and SURGEON-APOTHECARIES * of England and Wales meditate in the branch of the Medical Profession, which they practise: for, besides the correspondence between the College of Physicians and their Committee †, their general meetings, upon this subject, have been advertised; the presenting their petition to Parliament has been notified in the daily journals; and by various other means also has the Public

* This term is meant to designate that class of Practitioners, who, besides practising Pharmacy and dispensing medicines, practise Surgery also, and as Accoucheurs.

† See Appendix A.

been informed of their intentions. But, notwithstanding this publicity of their proceedings, the following questions have been asked, not only by individuals unconnected with the Profession, but even by members of the Learned Body over which you preside.—What are the Apothecaries about? What is the object of all the bustle they are making? For what are they petitioning Parliament? By demanding fees for their attendance, do they wish to set aside Physicians, and assume their practice?—It has also been asserted, that the practice of the Apothecary and Surgeon-Apothecary is a modern usurpation; that formerly the care of the sick was, properly, solely confided to the Physician; and that the real duty of the Apothecary is merely to compound his prescriptions; or is, exactly, that of the Compounding Chemist of the present day. And, lastly, come forward the Compounding Chemists and Druggists themselves, and declare, that many of the clauses of the proposed Bill are “deeply injurious to their
“ interests, and to the Public at large, in as
“ much as the operation of these clauses will be
“ to put all Compounders and Dispensers of
“ medicine under the controul of a Committee
“ of Apothecaries, (distinct from the Corporate
“ Body of Apothecaries,) and to give the Com-
“ mittee a power, by the making of bye-laws

“ and issuing *annual licences*, to use means of
 “ the greatest oppression and injustice ; and
 “ eventually to place a monopoly of the com-
 “ pounding and dispensing of medicines in the
 “ hands of the Apothecaries*.”

The abstract of the proposed Bill, which has just been published, will, to every considerate and impartial mind, prevent, even in its present form, in some degree the reiteration of those enquiries, and expose the fallacy of the assertions which follow them : but still a fuller explanation of the subject may reasonably be demanded by the Public ; and it is with the view of affording such, that I now take the liberty of addressing you in your collegiate character.

The subject naturally embraces three objects of enquiry :—1. Has the Apothecary the right to practise ; and how far will the proposed alterations affect the Physician.—2. Will they injure the compounding and dispensing Chemist and Druggist ?—3. What benefit will the Public receive from the change ?—In answering these queries, it shall be my endeavour to avoid any expressions that may be regarded as disrespectful to the

* See Resolutions of a Meeting held at the Free Masons Tavern, 4th March 1813, Mr. Hudson in the chair.—*Morning Chronicle*, 8th March 1813.

higher class of the Profession ; although I feel myself called upon warmly to repel many illiberal aspersions, which have been unguardedly thrown out affecting the professional character of the Apothecary and Surgeon-Apothecary ; even, as has been already hinted, questioning their utility as members of the Profession ; and attempting to sink their qualifications to practise, if not below, at least to the level of those of the dispensing Druggist, the mere trader in pills and potions. It will be no difficult task, I trust, to prove the utility and importance of the regularly educated Apothecary* ; and to shew that, when fully competent to the duties of his situation, although his brows be not decorated with academic honours, yet he may calmly repose his head in the decline of life, with the conviction of having lessened by his exertions much of the accumulated sum of human affliction.—But to pursue my subject.

I. Has the Apothecary a right to practise : and how far will the proposed alterations affect the Physician ?

For the sake of arrangement, I will consider this question under the four following heads :—

* To prevent repetitions, the term Apothecary, throughout the remainder of the letter, is meant to imply both the *Apothecary*, or Practitioner in Pharmacy only, and the *Surgeon-Apothecary*.

1. the necessity or right of the Apothecary and Surgeon-Apothecary to visit and prescribe for the sick : 2. the utility, allowing that necessity, of this class of Practitioners : 3. the nature of the education, which is requisite to render him an efficient member of the Profession : and, 4. the kind and degree of remuneration, admitting this competency, which his services merit.

If antiquity stamps a superior value on whatever bears its rust ; or if the propriety of any custom is to be determined by the distance of the period at which it was first adopted, it would be easy to prove that the practice of the Apothecary is not a *modern usurpation* : but that he has been employed to attend on and prescribe for the sick from very remote periods. It is probable, that, in the earlier periods of society, every one, who undertook the cure of diseases, dispensed the medicines he prescribed ; and hence the employment of the Apothecary must naturally have preceded that of the Physician as both are now practised. But not to wander beyond the periods of historical record, we are informed that the priests of Egypt, who were the physicians of their time, dispensed the remedies they employed ; the Druids cut down, and prepared with their own hands, the misletoe, their great panacea ; and Hippocrates, with the other Greek Physicians of the times proximate to his, personally

compounded all the medicines they used ; and, in some instances, exhibited what they had prepared. At this period, Surgery also was practised in Greece by physicians ; and it was not until the time of Erasistratus that medicine was divided into three distinct branches. “ Iisdem-
 “ que temporibus,” says Celsus, “ in tres partes
 “ medicina deducta est : ut una esset, quæ
 “ victu ; altera, quæ medicamentis ; tertia, quæ
 “ manu mederetur. Primam διατηρητικὴν, secundam
 “ φαρμακευτικὴν, tertiam χειρουργικὴν, Græci nomi-
 “ narunt * :” and it is extremely probable, from the voluminous treatise, which this author wrote on pharmacy, that he himself practised it, or was a dispenser of medicine. Without, however, pursuing further such remote inquiries, let us confine our attention to the existence of the Apothecary, and the nature of his office in the earlier periods of the history of our own country.

In the twelfth and thirteenth century the regular practice of physic in England was almost solely confided to the clergy† ; or, at least clerical dignities were frequently conferred on Medical Practitioners ; a circumstance which, prior to the period when a charter was granted to the College

* Celsus *de Medicina*, lib. i.

† Dr. Chambre, and the celebrated Linacre the first President of the Royal College of Physicians, possessed preben-

of Physicians, gave them probably great court influence. Thus, among many other instances, we find that Richard, the son of Nigel, Bishop of Ely, who was both Treasurer and *Apothecary* to Henry the Second and the two succeeding monarchs, was afterwards created Bishop of London*; a fact which, at least, implies that he was a man of erudition and consequence. In 1345, one hundred and fifty years prior to the foundation of the College of Physicians, we are informed that Coursus de Gangeland, Apothecary to Edward the Third, received from that monarch a pension of sixpence a-day, as a reward for his care of, and *attendance* on, the king's person, during an illness which he had in Scotland†. Henry the Eighth, we are also told,

dal dignities. The appointment of Dr. Edward Fynche, "Physic Doctor," to a Prebendal Stall in St. Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, in 1522, is thus stated in the *Acta Publica*:—"ratione resignationis vel demissionis Doctoris Lynacre, ultimi Canonici sive Prebendii ejusdem." *Rhymer's Fædæra*, T. 6. P. I. p. 207.

* "Ricardus Nigelli quondam Eliensis Episcopi filius et Regis Henrici *Apotecarius*, et demum Londinensis Episcopus." — *Angl. Sax. P. I.* p. 304, quoted by *Maddox, Hist. and Antiq. of the Exch.* vol. i. p. 79.

† "De Pensione Apothecario solvendæ. Curam sollicitam, quam dilectus nobis, Coursus de Gangeland, Apothecario Londoni, circa nos, nuper in partibus Scotiæ, dum gravi detinebamur ægritudine, apposuit, debite meritantes." *Rhymer, Acta Publica*; T. 2. P. IV. p. 190.

granted forty marks, per annum, to John Soda, Apothecary, for his attendance on the Princess Mary*: from which it is not unreasonable to infer, that the custom of Apothecaries attending the sick had continued in the interval for two hundred years. From that period a regular Apothecary has been appointed for the Royal Family.

It was not until thirty-seven years after the establishment of the College of Physicians, which happened in 1519, that we hear of the practice of the Apothecary being disturbed. In the third year of Queen Mary's reign, both "Surgeons" and Apothecaries were prohibited the practising of Physick†; but although this prohibition was attempted to be strictly enforced, yet we find the College again in 1632 petitioning Charles the First to issue his royal edict:—

* Pro Pharmacopola — A.D. 1537, an. 28, Julii 9, Hen. VIII.

“ Rex omnibus ad quos, &c.

“ Salutem:

“ Sciatis quod de gratia nostra speciali, ac pro eo quod
 “ assignavimus delectam servientem nostrum Iohannem Soda,
 “ Pharmacopolam, attendere Præcharissimæ Filix nostræ
 “ Dominæ Mariæ pro meliore cura et consideratione sanitatis suæ dedimus et concessimus, ac per presentes damus
 “ et concedimus eidem Iohanni quadraginta marcas sterling.
 “ per annum,” &c. &c. *Rhymer.*

† Goodall, p. 310.

“ that under the most severe penalties, no Apo-
 “ thecary for the future shall dare to compound
 “ for the well, or administer to the sick, any
 “ medicines, especially vomits, purges, opiates,
 “ mercurial or antimonial remedies, without the
 “ prescription of Physicians then living*.” It is
 true, that in the reign of Elizabeth, and the two
 subsequent reigns, various actions were brought
 by the College against Surgeons, Apothecaries,
 and others ; but these were almost entirely
 “ *propter malam praxim*,” and empiricism ; and
 were often instituted on the complaints of those
 who had suffered ; so that we conclude the better
 informed Apothecaries of these periods still prac-
 tised unmolested. Indeed, the actions which
 were instituted against regular Apothecaries for
 practising as such, were very few ; the maligni-
 ty of the College being directed chiefly against
 the Surgeons, who were prosecuted for giving
 internal medicines, even in surgical cases ; but
 the influence thus exerted was considered, even
 in those days, as in no degree honourable to the
 Profession. It is, also, important to recollect,
 that these restraints did not, at any time, affect
 practitioners beyond seven miles round London,
 the limits to which the jurisdiction of the College
 extends.

* Goodall, p. 437.

After the reign of Charles the First, the interdictions of Apothecaries and Surgeons to practise medicine gradually became obsolete ; and in an act of the sixth of William the Third, which was made perpetual in the ninth of George the First, the reasons assigned for exempting Apothecaries from serving the offices of constable, scavenger, and parish and ward offices, and from serving on juries, are, that “ they cannot
 “ perform the trusts reposed in them as they
 “ ought, nor *attend* the sick with such diligence
 “ as is required.”

Since this time the progressive increase of the middle orders of the community, with “ the
 “ changes that have taken place in their habits
 “ of life,” have established the practice of the Apothecary, as a matter of necessity, on a basis not likely to be shaken. His right to practise has even been admitted, by what may be termed authority, in as much as the outlines of a plan for a better regulation of the whole Profession, circulated by the Royal College of Physicians some years ago, but never carried into effect, comprehends, under the title of *Medical Practitioners, Physicians, Surgeons, and Apothecaries* ; and even provides for the proper medical education of the Apothecary before he can be allowed to practise*.

* See Appendix B.

These facts, Sir, are, I flatter myself, sufficient to repel the charge of the practice of the Apothecary being a modern usurpation; and to establish its necessity equally by its antiquity, by the acknowledgment of the Legislature, and the College of Physicians, and by custom. Indeed, if the authority to restrain Apothecaries from practice reposed in the College of Physicians, were expedient at a time, when star-gazers, magicians, and impostors of every description assumed the right of attending the sick, and when, owing to the general ignorance of the age, the public was disposed to confide in them; although the intrusion of pretenders is still a principal cause of complaint; yet, change of circumstances, and the general intelligence of the present era, render these powers absolutely a dead letter. Unless the structure of the society of this favoured island could be altogether altered, and a second golden age dispense equally the gifts of Fortune to all ranks of its inhabitants, either Apothecaries must be permitted to practise, or different gradations of Physicians be established, as is the case in several parts of the continent*:

* On the continent of Europe there are several gradations of Physicians, whose fees are apportioned to the class of patients for which they are intended to prescribe; while the Apothecary is exactly in the situation of the Dispensing Che-

for, to deny the necessity of such a permission would be as absurd, as to “contend, that, as “the Apothecary sees more patients, his skill “must be greater than that of the Physician*,” an assertion that has been falsely imputed to the Associated Apothecaries now appealing to Parliament. Nor, can it be fairly argued that the taking upon him the sole management of diseases is an improper assumption of the Apothecary. If the great bulk of the people be unable to pay the Physician’s fees, as established in this country, and hence obtain his assistance, who is to perform the duty? Can the Druggist do it? Could the Apothecary, if he were to confine his attention solely to the compounding Physicians’ prescriptions, and the sale of medicines? Certainly not:—the call of the public, therefore, on the Apothecary to take upon himself the duties of a sub or minor Physician has been imperative; and it is happy for that public, that he now feels the inclination as well as the necessity of qualifying himself by study and observation for the important duties of his situation; and to

mist and Druggist in this country: many of the continental Physicians, therefore, are not superior, either in *education* or *estimation*, to a well-educated Apothecary, or Surgeon-Apothecary in England.

* *London Med. Rev.* Oct. 1812, p. 335.

become the professional garb with which he has been invested.

2. That the Apothecary or Surgeon-Apothecary is absolutely necessary as a member of the Profession, in this country, cannot be questioned. This is the case, whether we regard him as the ordinary medical attendant of the middle and labouring classes ; or as the Assistant of the Physician in his attendance on the more opulent part of the community ; or, which is, perhaps, of equal importance, as the source from which the great mass of Practitioners supplied for the army, the navy, and the colonies, derive the first rudiments of their professional education.

In a trading and manufacturing country like Great Britain, there must always exist a very large proportion of the people, who by their industry and labour are capable of earning a sufficiency to supply their immediate wants, and render themselves and their families comparatively comfortable ; but who cannot afford to pay a Physician's fees in ordinary cases of disease. To this class of the population the services of the Apothecary and Surgeon-Apothecary are of the utmost importance ; and, if his education has been such as it ought to be, and must in future be, if the proposed Bill obtain the sanc-

tion of the Legislature, he is generally adequate to all that is required of him : for, in cases of great danger or difficulty, even here the assistance of the Physician is demanded. To the poorer class, again, he is the sole Physician ; and it is not, surely, going beyond the truth to assert, that of the entire population of the country, the health of seven tenths of it is altogether submitted to his care. A very considerable proportion of the ailments of that class, also, which more commonly employs the Physician, are solely entrusted to him ; and his services cannot with propriety be dispensed with, even when the Physician is in attendance. I am aware that it has been the fashion of late years, with some Physicians, to wave consultations altogether with the attending Apothecary ; and, by requesting their prescriptions to be made up by a Druggist, to imply the inutility of an Apothecary when a Physician is employed. In stating this fact, I wish to be understood as not making any general reflection on the character of the Physician ; on the contrary, as a member of the Profession, deeply interested for its honour, I feel proud in asserting that Medicine can boast of men of the most profound and extensive erudition, of unbounded benevolence, candour, and liberality of sentiment, whose manners and professional skill equally adorn the gentleman

and the Physician. But the partial occurrence of the fact, as stated, is unfortunately undeniable, and its consequences are materially injurious, not only to the emolument, but the professional character of the Apothecary.

If medicine were arrived at such a degree of perfection, that the Physician could calculate with certainty, in every case, on the favourable operation of the remedies he prescribes, then might the services of the Apothecary be dispensed with, and his attendance regarded as nugatory when the Physician is employed ; while the Physician and the Druggist might be considered as fully adequate for the removal of disease. But as long as the springs of life are hidden from the ken of mortals ; while the causes of the greater number of the symptoms of disease remain involved in mystery ; so long must disappointment, too frequently, cloud the most rational hopes of the Physician, although these be founded on the soundest theoretical reasonings, a thorough knowledge of pathology, and even prior successful experience. It need scarcely, indeed, be stated, that much of the success in the cure of diseases depends on watching the changes, which occur in their symptoms, whether these be spontaneous, or result from the remedies employed. As the assistant of the

Physician in carefully observing these changes, the utility of the apothecary must be fully acknowledged. He is generally more familiar in the family of the patient than the Physician is ; he can have access to him at all hours ; and is ever ready to attend him on every summons, whether the occasion be really urgent, or only fancied ; hence he has a very frequent and excellent opportunity of observing the effects of medicines, and marking the changes in diseases. From these circumstances, much of the proper understanding of the case by the Physician, must depend on the report which the Apothecary makes to him, at the repetition of his visits. It is well known, that the employment of the most judiciously prescribed medicines often requires to be suspended ; or the dose to be suddenly augmented or decreased ; and in many instances, by the immediate exhibition of some remedy not previously thought of, a malady may be cut short, which would otherwise prove fatal. These are circumstances which the family of the invalid cannot observe ; and which the Druggist has no opportunity of doing, were he, even, equal to the task ; and it is from the consideration of the importance of the observations of the attending Apothecary, that many enlightened and liberal Physicians not only acknowledge his usefulness, but allow him a certain degree of latitude in altering their

prescriptions, as circumstances may direct, and according as they can confide in his judgment, observation, and discretion.

With regard to the utility of the Apothecary as the early instructor of youth training to the Profession, it is unnecessary to descant, as its effects are so obvious and of such daily occurrence. For even, although a young man be in some degree neglected while in the laboratory of an Apothecary or Surgeon-Apothecary, which is seldom the case where the master has been regularly educated, yet, the simply compounding medicines, and the occasional opportunities he has of seeing the diseases for which they are prescribed, familiarise him with the tools at least of the Profession, and make him feel more forcibly the importance of his future studies. When his education is completed, also, the habit he has acquired of observing disease, however superficial, brings him to the bed side of his patient with confidence, and certainly very competent in many minute circumstances requisite to be attended to in prescribing for the sick. How often do we observe, from the defect of a knowledge of such minutiae, even the best informed academic graduates frequently feeling awkward and confused in their outset in practise ; and to overcome which it is occasionally

requisite for them to become the pupils of the Apothecary. "They," says a learned Physician, "are afterwards usually placed with an Apothecary, for instruction in Pharmacy; a situation not so flattering to vanity, nor so favourable for the polite accomplishments as a College, but highly advantageous and necessary for the preliminary instruction of a Physician. They learn there to distinguish, select, preserve, and also to prepare and compound those materials, with which they are chiefly to accomplish all that future skill and learning can enable them in curing and alleviating disease. An accurate knowledge of medicines, the primary and indispensable part of the education of every practitioner of physic, can be obtained only by actually preparing them. The pupil of an Apothecary is early habituated, not only to distinguish and prepare, but also to observe the quantities and proportions administered, and the operation and powers of medicines. In addition to these important advantages, and that of learning Pharmaceutic Chemistry, the situation generally admits of much reading, frequently of anatomical instruction, and sometimes of attending lectures*." If these be the advantages which the pupil of the Apothecary

* *Stanger's Justification*, p. 21.

derives, and that they are such in many instances cannot be denied, how important is it, even for the whole Profession, to protect the Apothecary or mixed Practitioner ; and how extensively useful are those provisions of the intended Bill, which refer to the means of rendering him more competent for all the duties of his situation ?

It has been inconsiderately reported by some persons, but for the honour of the Profession, I trust, incorrectly, that an impression has been felt in the Learned Body over which you preside, that the superior competence of the Apothecary would affect the importance, and, consequently, the fortune of the Physician. I cannot allow myself, for an instant, to credit such a report. Can the rendering any branch of an honourable Profession better qualified for the performance of its peculiar duties, prove injurious to another branch of the same Profession, on whom the general sentiment of mankind has conferred superior rank, both as to learning and liberality ; and is there room for jealousy where there can be no rivalry ? If it excite any feeling whatever, it must be one highly advantageous to the Public, a feeling of honourable emulation in the Physician to retain by still higher accomplishments and information that superiority over the Apothecary which has been willingly conceded

to him. It is, indeed, true, that as pretenders have usurped the name and functions of the Apothecary, so men of some address, but little learning or medical talent, have obtained access to the College; and it is not surprising that such men should feel alarmed at the idea of meeting Apothecaries in consultation, by whom their defects would be readily perceived. To use the language of a very learned and competent Physician*, “there are men against whom you
 “can commit no higher offence, than to shew
 “any anxiety that your profession should be
 “generally improved: the least movement or
 “tendency that way excites jealousy and resist-
 “ance, as if the struggle were for life and
 “being.” Such men fear the consequences of the active measures, which the Apothecary is taking to render himself more competent, only because they themselves must consequently be forced to shake off their habits of indolence, and apply the spur to their almost dormant energies, or be content to be distanced in the race for the prize of professional excellence, by some on whom they now scarcely deign to look down from the elevated spot, on which a fortunate coincidence of circumstances, rather than their own merit, has placed them.

* Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh.

3. If the utility of the properly-educated Apothecary as a Member of the Profession be admitted, ought not a regular education to be considered as essentially necessary for every Candidate prior to his being admitted to practice? But this question may be asked—What is the nature of the education, which is requisite to render him an efficient Member of the Profession?

The Apothecary is, and, perhaps, always must be a being of an amphibological genus, belonging partly to the class of professional men, partly to that of traders. It may be observed, that owing to a remuneration for his time and skill having only been tacitly admitted to be *equitable*, but not sanctioned by any law *up to this day*, “the profession is, necessarily, subordinate “to the trade*,” hence, that part of education which is intended to fit him for his professional duties, has been, perhaps, too much neglected. Indeed, in considering this part of my subject, candour obliges me to confess my wish, that a veil could be thrown over the past, and even much of the present. I protest, however, against the scandalous assertion, “that his library generally consists of little more than Pharmaco-

* MS. Essay, by Mr. Kerrison, presented to the Committee.

“ pœias and files of Prescriptions, and his ac-
 “ quirements are restricted to mysterious man-
 “ ners and an insinuating address* ;” but, I am
 nevertheless perfectly ready to allow that many
 Apothecaries are more versed in the cunning of
 the Trade, than the science of the Profession.
 I would demand, whence has this evil originat-
 ed? Has it not sprung from the disrepute which
 has been attempted, ever since the establish-
 ment of the Royal College of Physicians, to be
 thrown upon this branch of the Profession?
 from a little of the old leaven, which was form-
 ed in the unhappy days of servility†, when its
 members were crushed under the iron tyranny
 of that College, still adhering to it? But, chiefly,
 from the want of a proper superintending body
 to protect the professional interests of the Apo-
 thecary and Mixed Practitioner. Is it from the
 want of this protection, and the advantages
 which would accrue from it, that so few young
 men of respectability are, now, bound appren-
 tices to Apothecaries?

To render any profession an object for the
 consideration of a parent, in a respectable con-

* *London Med. Review*, Oct. 1812, p. 336.

† *Goodall*, p. 356, *et passim*.

dition of life, in disposing of his son, it must possess respectability, and hold forth the prospect of such a degree of emolument, as will enable him, if not to rise above, at least to maintain the same rank in society as his father held: and, unless it does this, the number of pupils will either be very few, or they will proceed from the lower classes only of the Community. Both these circumstances have taken place in our branch of the Profession. I shall not enquire further into the causes which have operated in diminishing the number, and keeping back the more respectable description, of apprentices, of late years; but, certainly, the deficiency in both respects has been too apparent; and the prior education of many of those that have entered has been such as to prevent them from studying the scientific part of the Profession, either with credit to themselves, or advantage to the public. It may be argued that, if the Practitioners, thus formed, do not enlighten Medicine by new discoveries, or astonish mankind by novelty of practice in desperate cases, yet that they may do much good as *routine Apothecaries*, who can always recur to the assistance of the Physician whenever they feel themselves inadequate to the management of a case. But I must contend, that such men are but ill calculated to perceive danger when it is present; and

have seldom candour enough to acknowledge the errors into which they may fall. What is denominated routine practice has too long been disgraceful to the Profession. No remedy ought ever to be exhibited without reasoning on its probable effects, and without an accurate knowledge on the part of the Practitioner of the indications which demand its administration ; for to occasion any unnecessary suffering, or harm, or danger to a patient from ignorance, is real injustice and cruelty, and an unpardonable outrage on human nature. It is but justice, however, to state, that the intellectual gleam from the torch of Philosophy, emerging from the schools, which has been shed upon every walk of life in this country of late years, has directed the eyes of those who have thus set out in a wrong path to that which they ought to pursue ; and consequently has done much to overcome the fundamental deficiencies of education, which have just been noticed. A stimulus of emulation has been pretty generally felt ; and, we now see more young men, at the conclusion of their apprenticeships, crowding the theatres of Medical and Philosophical Lecturers, and labouring in the schools of Anatomy and Chemistry, than at any former period of the History of Medicine. By taking advantage of this favourable impulse, much permanent benefit may be reasonably expected to

result from establishing the necessity of a liberal education prior to an apprenticeship ; and holding forth a prospect of future respectability in practice, worthy of the exertions required to obtain it. To effect this, no moment, surely, can be more favourable than the present, when mankind in general begin to be convinced, that for the successful practice of medicine nothing occult nor preternatural is required ; that a good understanding, combined with industry and perseverance in obtaining a complete knowledge of the animal economy, and the laws by which it is governed ; or, in other words, the study of anatomy, comprehending Physiology and Pathology, of Chemistry, Botany, Materia Medica, and the Practice of Medicine, with a talent, either natural or acquired, for correct observation, are the only certain means of possessing a competent knowledge of diseases and their remedies. Can it be doubted that every candidate for the privilege to practise as an Apothecary should give sufficient proofs of his having advantageously studied these various branches of medical science, before he can be declared competent to the duties of his situation ?

In the proposed Bill, the necessity of every youth having had a classical education, before he can be bound to the Profession is insisted on :

and to secure this, he shall not be suffered to offer himself before he has attained his sixteenth year. This is evidently the best means of laying a foundation for those future studies that are to qualify him as a practitioner. It may, however, be urged, and with some show of reason, that a classical education is unnecessary, and refining too much; but, it is to be presumed, that, by demanding this qualification in apprentices, a superior description of youth will be introduced into the Profession; which, with the proposed fine on indentures, will effect much in the outset for its future respectability. An acquaintance also with the Greek and Latin languages cannot but be regarded as essential, when it is considered that almost all the terms of Anatomy and Chemistry, and many of the names of diseases, are derived from Greek roots; and that the Latin is, and probably always will be, the language of prescription. It is, also, of the first importance, that a young man should be able to examine the opinions and practice of the Fathers of physic in the language in which they wrote*; and as classical learning is an ornament

* It may be supposed to be refining too much to expect that the young Apothecary shall read the ancient medical authors in the original languages: but as an Apothecary's pupil may rise to the highest honours of the Profession, a complete classical education is strongly to be recommended.

of the gentleman, so it sheds an additional lustre on the medical character in every rank of the Profession.

With regard to the future studies of the candidate for practice, if it be allowed that the Apothecary or Surgeon-Apothecary must necessarily have, in a great majority of the cases to which he is called, the sole management of the disease, and, consequently, incurs much responsibility; his education ought undoubtedly to be such as to enable him with propriety to assume so important a trust.

Although it is undeniable that many of the mixed Practitioners of the present day merit all the confidence that can be reposed in them, having received educations, both classical and medical, not inferior to those of the majority of Physicians; and that many of them have, by their observations and discoveries, very much advanced medical science; yet, it must be allowed that many, on the contrary, can only rely on their natural understandings, and the limited experience of their own practice, for any knowledge of their Profession which they possess. It is to prevent the existence of this description of Practitioners from being continued beyond the present generation, that it is pro-

posed to institute examinations to ascertain the competency of every candidate for practice. That such have not already been instituted, must appear extraordinary to every considerate mind; but the assertion is not less true than melancholy, that any person however illiterate, may commence practice as an Apothecary; and, from the inadequate judgment which daily experience proves the public is capable of forming of the medical character, what mischief, I demand, may thus result before the incapacity of a pretender be discovered? But if it were necessary to submit to an examination, before practice could be commenced—if a competent knowledge of Anatomy, Chemistry, Botany, and the Theory and Practice of Medicine were required to be displayed by every candidate for a certificate, it would soon be found, that although, as long as there exists various degrees of talent in different men, there must still exist Practitioners of different degrees of efficiency, yet less danger would be likely to result even from the mistakes of the weakest of the qualified than is to be feared from the temerity of ignorance.

It is with the view to these examinations chiefly that a Superintending Body is proposed*:

* The following is the proposed constitution of the Superintending Body :—“ The President and four Censors of the .

and, certainly, if a superior qualification to that which now exists be requisite, and an indispensable step to practise, no objection can be reasonably urged against the tribunal by which it is proposed to be ascertained; It has, nevertheless, been hinted, that the College of Physicians regards this as the most objectionable part of our plan; alledging as a reason, that the Apothecary aspires too much; that he has already acquired a situation of sufficient importance and responsibility; and that, as there exists a Society of Apothecaries, with corporate powers, the formation of a fourth medical body is unnecessary. In answer to the first of these remarks, I will not hesitate to assert, that if the Apothecary aspires, it is with a praise-worthy emulation to render himself equal to the duties of his station only; not to stand in competition with the Phy-

College of Physicians, the Master and two Governors of the College of Surgeons, the Master and two Wardens of the Society of Apothecaries, all for the time being, and twenty-four persons practising as Apothecaries or Surgeon-Apothecaries, or Men-Midwives, to be named, who have been in practice for ten years in London or within ten miles of it, and their Successors, to be a Committee for the purposes of this Act, and to superintend and to have controul over the persons practising the Profession of Apothecary, Surgeon-Apothecary, and Midwife, and Compounder and Dispenser of Medicines throughout England and Wales."

Abstract of "A Bill," &c. Clause 1.

sician, who must ever hold the first rank in the Profession, and retain all that class of patients which can afford to obtain what may be denominated the luxury of physic. The Physician will still be consulted in all cases of difficulty and danger, and this is likely to be more frequently the case, in the event of Apothecaries becoming more efficient, and capable of discriminating; and free from any dread, that the requesting that assistance might be the means of exposing their own inefficiency.

With regard to the Society of Apothecaries, it may be necessary for the public information to state, that this body, although highly respectable, yet is merely a trading company, which has never taken cognizance of the professional qualifications of its own members; and has no jurisdiction whatever over the Apothecaries and Surgeon-Apothecaries, who, although they practise in London or its immediate vicinity, yet are not its members. Besides it has never had any jurisdiction over the great mass of Country Practitioners. Indeed, from the mode in which the Court of Assistants is constituted, it would be but ill calculated for the task of scientific examination: and a very strong argument that may be adduced, against the idea of the Society of

Apothecaries being adequate to the duties of the proposed Superintending Body, is, that of 148 of its members who are Practitioners in London, 110 have concurred in the measures of the Committee*. If, then, examinations be requisite; if your College refuse to examine us; and if the Society of Apothecaries be inadequate to the task, who so proper as those, who, having at heart the supporting the honour and promoting the advantage of the branch of the Profession, which they profess, are most likely to guard it against the intrusion of the unqualified, and admit to it those only whose talents and acquirements are calculated to promote its interests?

The formation of a Superintending Body, such as has been described, cannot be objected

* The number of Apothecaries and Surgeon-Apothecaries practising in London and its immediate vicinity is about 700. The number of the Apothecaries Society is about 368; 24 of which are of the Court of Assistants, 123 of the Livery, and 221 of the Yeomanry or Freemen: of these, 85 of the Livery are retired from practice, or reside in the country, or are Druggists; and the remaining 38 only are Practising Apothecaries in London: 121 of the Freemen are retired from practice, or are Country Practitioners, or Druggists, and 100 are Practising Apothecaries in London; so that of the 368 persons of which the Society consists, 148 only are Practitioners in London.

to, on the supposition that it would interfere with the privileges of any of the already constituted medical bodies. With those of the Royal College of Physicians it cannot intermeddle in any manner whatsoever; and the reported opposition of the College to its establishment cannot be explained, unless, as Dr. Harrison has hinted, in speaking of their objections to his plans for a general medical reform, “they are conscious that the interests of the Profession cannot be reconciled to those of the College of Physicians; and, therefore, rather than join in procuring regulations useful to society, are desirous of preserving their authority unimpaired, however prejudicial it may be to medical science and the public welfare*.” It is barely possible, also, that some individual Members of the College may feel jealous of the superior qualifications, which the establishment of such a Superintending Court is likely to confer on the Apothecary; but I cannot allow myself for a moment to harbour the belief, that the opposition of that Learned Body can spring from such unworthy motives.

The extensive authority, with which it is proposed to invest the Superintending Com-

* *Harrison's Address*, 8vo. London, 1810, p. 101.

mittee to regulate the practice of Apothecaries, may, indeed, excite some degree of jealousy in the Royal College, whose jurisdiction does not exceed a circuit of seven miles round London. But without stopping to enquire into the policy of such a limitation of the power of the College, I will only observe, that the Apothecaries, in endeavouring to obtain a more extended jurisdiction, have been influenced by the desire that the advantages of the proposed reform should be felt in every part of the kingdom; and as the general interests of Apothecaries must be the same in all parts, these can be protected only by the supreme authority being vested in a Metropolitan Committee, while their local interests are more immediately left in the hands of District Courts acting under it.

The Royal College of Surgeons had certainly more reason for suspecting some infringement of their power, from misunderstanding that clause of the Abstract which states, that the projected Superintending Body would have authority to examine Surgeon-Apothecaries*. It has however, I believe, been explained, that no

* This term has been the chief source of error with the College of Surgeons. It is meant to imply a person, who, having a diploma from the College of Surgeons, practices, also, as an Apothecary.

person shall obtain a certificate to practise as a Surgeon-Apothecary, without having previously procured a diploma from the College of Surgeons ; and I trust that highly respectable Body will officially notify to the Committee their determination to remain neutral ; indeed no obstacles to the measure in question can be anticipated from that quarter. As to the Society of Apothecaries, there is no intention of meddling in any way with their rights as a trading body ; and as, as has been already mentioned, they possess no controul, even over their own members as professional men, and absolutely none whatever over the great body of mixed Practitioners, it is difficult to conceive in what respect their privileges can in the smallest degree be affected by the formation of a fourth legally constituted Medical Body. But, how far they may be biased by the College of Physicians, it is not my province, nor is it very important to ascertain. From the above statement, then, it is pretty evident, that no reasonable objection can be advanced against the formation of the projected Superintending Committee ; and it is not difficult to conceive that the most important advantages are likely to result from it, as far as the competency of Apothecaries, and consequently the benefit of the Public, are concerned. Let us, now, examine,

4. What kind and degree of remuneration, admitting his competency, the services of the Apothecary merit.—In considering this point, I feel the peculiar delicacy of the task I have to perform, and the slippery nature of the ground on which I am about to tread. But, although, as a member of that branch of the Profession whose cause I am advocating, I must naturally feel some partiality towards it, and therefore may be supposed liable to undue bias ; yet, I will endeavour as much as possible to lose sight of personal interest, and state the case fairly, both as it regards the Public and the Profession.

In whatsoever manner the question be considered, we must still regard the Apothecary* in two points of view,—as a “ *Professional Man*,” and as a “ *Dealer or Tradesman*†;” and the remuneration of his services must, consequently, be regulated according as he is called

* It is to be recollected that this term implies throughout both the Apothecary and Surgeon-Apothecary.

† For the greater part of the observations on this division of my subject, I am indebted to an excellent MS. Essay on the state of the branch of the Profession under review, presented to the Committee by R. M. Kerrison, Esq. of New Burlington-Street.

upon to act, either in the one or the other capacity, or in both at the same period of time.

“ Whenever an Apothecary is intrusted with
 “ the sole management of a patient, *he is a*
 “ *Professional Man*, and as such ought to be
 “ paid for his services.”

“ Whenever a Physician, or an Hospital-
 “ Surgeon is called first to a patient, and, as
 “ long as he prescribes without the attendance
 “ of the Apothecary being requested or required ;
 “ the latter, on such occasions, as he merely fur-
 “ nishes the medicines, is a *Dealer* or *Tradesman* ;
 “ and, therefore, entitled to demand the value
 “ only of the compounds prescribed, which
 “ should of course be charged at the *lowest*
 “ *rate*.”

“ In many instances, the Apothecary may
 “ begin an attendance of difficulty or danger,
 “ and the assistance of the Physician be after-
 “ wards demanded ; if the Apothecary’s per-
 “ sonal attendance should be *continued by desire*
 “ *during the Physician’s attendance*, he is still
 “ to be regarded as a *Professional Man*: but, if
 “ his attendance be not requested, he may, yet,
 “ supply the medicines in his capacity of a
 “ *Tradesman* or *Dealer*. In other cases, the
 “ reverse may happen. The Physician may,

“ first, have the sole management of the patient ; and when the danger is past, or, at the pleasure of the patient or his friends, may leave the case to the *entire superintendence* of the Apothecary ; who, thus, having begun his labours as a tradesman, terminates them in a professional capacity.”

In the mixed mode of operation, which has just been described, a close parrallel may be drawn between the state of the *Attorney* and that of the *Apothecary*. “ Both hold a rank nearly equal in society, and usually both have had a liberal education.” Let us examine their functions. “ The one undertakes a case, and, in points of doubt or intricacy, consults a special pleader or barrister : ” the other attends a case of disease, and, in the event of difficulty or danger, calls in a Physician or Hospital-Surgeon.” In what way are they paid ? Here, alas ! the parallel ends ! “ The Attorney is legally entitled to six shillings and eightpence for his advice, besides a profit upon his proceedings, which, however, are obliged to be charged low, as his bill is liable to taxation. But the Apothecary cannot demand a fee, however small, for his advice ; and is, *therefore*, obliged to charge more than a moderate price for his drugs, as a reward for the employment of his time, and his skill ; and his

“ charge being regulated by usage only, he is
 “ left to the distressing alternative of either
 “ losing his time with a very uncertain prospect
 “ of remuneration, or of repaying himself in a
 “ mode repugnant to his feelings, and incon-
 “ sistent with his real character as a member of
 “ a learned and liberal profession.”

If the general state of the Apothecary in this country be compared with the situation of the individual bearing the same appellation in other countries, no analogy is perceived to exist between them. But this circumstance arises from the state of society in this kingdom having no pallel in any other part of the world. In no other country can the higher ranks afford to pay the Physician as he is paid in England ; and as nowhere else does there exist a middle class of the community, possessing the same independence, information, property, and comfort, so in no other country is the Apothecary, the ordinary Physician of this class, qualified to perform the duty with which he is here necessarily intrusted. Even between the Physicians of this and other countries, no parallel can be drawn ; which will appear manifest by taking a cursory view of the general state of medical practitioners on the continent of Europe.

Over the continent the Physician is the only

prescriber in medical cases ; but, then, there are either various gradations of Physicians, suited to the different classes of the community, or, as is the case in France, the general Physician apportions his fee to the circumstances of his patients. Thus in the highest practice, among the Noblesse and Gentry, the fee is *six francs* (five shillings); but they take in general practice, and from people of small incomes and those in trade, *un petit ecu* (half a crown) only, which may in fact be regarded as the usual fee. In Holland and Germany the Physician's fee is *two guilders* (about two shillings and eightpence); and it is in Vienna only, that the fashionable Physicians receive *a ducat* (about ten shillings and six pence). The continental Physician, indeed, except in a few instances in Paris and some other cities having universities, does not hold the same rank in society as the Physician in this country, either in point of learning or of fortune: but his situation is more that of the well-educated English Apothecary. “ He is resorted to as frequently on the slightest occasion, keeps a memorandum of the number of his visits, and sends his account annually, to established families; and, to others, after each indisposition. In genteel practice he often leaves a blank space to be filled up at the pleasure of the patient, and which is a source of frequent extra-emolument.” The continental Apothe-

cary is a mere compounder, resembling in a great degree the compounding Chemist and Druggist of this metropolis: “ and from the “ abundance of drugs and herbs employed in the “ opulose Pharmacy of the continent,” his trade requires as much manual labour and capital as is requisite in the shop of the Chemist and Druggist. He is generally an opulent tradesman, and frequently a scientific chemist; but never prescribes for nor visits the sick. The French Surgeons, however, even those in Paris, although they are not legally allowed to practise any thing but surgery, occasionally trespass upon the duties of the Physician, by prescribing in cases of general disease, and are paid at the rate of thirty sous (1s. 3d.) for each visit. In the country in France, as in Great Britain, the same individual performs the medical, surgical, and pharmaceutic duties. “ He is, what the French “ call, *Chirurgien juré*, that is, a Member of “ the College of Surgeons who has passed “ through his studies and has taken a Diploma. “ Until the year 1760 he was also a barber, “ (*perruquier*,) but that menial office was then “ separated from the duties of a Village-Surgeon in France.” He is less respectable in every point of view than the English Surgeon-Apothecary; but in one respect very closely resembles him — *on ne leur paye que les drogues.*”

From the above statement it is obvious, that no direct comparison can be drawn between the condition of Medical Practitioners on the continent and in this country. But it may, nevertheless, be argued that the mixed Practitioner, in England, “ is held in higher estimation in “ society, and perhaps, notwithstanding his “ real grievances, is better paid than men of “ a similar class in any other part of Europe;” but, the same observation is applicable to the Physician and the Surgeon. In reply, it may be fairly asserted, that not only are the qualifications of all superior, but the state of society absolutely demands that they should be better paid: and, therefore, with regard to the Apothecary, no argument can be adduced from the practice of other countries against the propriety of altering the present mode of remunerating his professional merits and services.

The present mode of remuneration has its advantages as well as its disadvantages to the Practitioner, it is, therefore, proper to enumerate both, in order fairly to appreciate the propriety of the proposed change.

“ The charge for medicine, as a commodity,
 “ notwithstanding the late enormous encrease
 “ in the price of phials, and the progressive ad-

“ vancement on chemicals and drugs, is, yet,
 “ above its intrinsic value.” But as this is the
 only method the Apothecary has of repaying
 himself for his time and professional skill, it
 would still admit of augmentation on the fair
 plea of the encreased price of glass and of drugs,
 and the advance of every article of living, from
 the unexampled pressure of the times. There
 has been no advance attempted for near a cen-
 tury ; the draught ninety years ago being what
 it is now, one shilling and sixpence, and the
 mixture from two shillings and sixpence to three
 shillings. One advantage, therefore, of the pre-
 sent mode of payment is, that it affords “ a
 “ remedy to prevent individual loss ; and per-
 “ haps no valid argument could be brought
 “ against raising the price of the draught to
 “ two shillings, and making a suitable advance
 “ upon other formulæ, when prescribed by the
 “ Apothecary.”

Another advantage of the present mode is,
 the repetitions of medicines in the most advanta-
 geous form without visits ; and it might be stated
 as a third, but that it has, now, nearly altogether
 fallen into the hands of the Druggists, the com-
 poundings prescriptions, where no attendance is
 required, or, at least, where it is expected that
 the Apothecary should “ call only now and then,

“ as a mark of respect.” But as a counterbalance to these advantages, which belong to the trading part of his character, the Apothecary’s attendance is often desired, and that daily, where little medicine is required ; and in the diseases of children it is “ impossible to send medicine “ in such a form as, fairly, to reward him for “ his time and talent.”

By continuing, also, to limit his remuneration to his charge for medicines, whatever superior qualification he might attain to, he would still preserve the stigma attached to him for sending more medicine than is necessary, which he conceives to be the greatest evil he has to contend with ; and tends to prevent that point being carried, which he regards as the primary object of his present exertions, “ the rendering the “ *Profession* superior to the *Trade*.”

From all that has been advanced, it must, I conceive, be admitted, that it would be more advantageous to the Public, as it certainly would be more creditable to the Apothecary, were he to receive a fair compensation for time and skill, “ instead of his present variable and objectionable reward by high “ charges on the medicine he furnishes.” And it only remains to ascertain what the nature of

that recompence ought to be : whether the medicine should be included in the fee ? or, whether his attendance should be recompensed by a small fee, and the medicines still charged, but at a very reduced price ; “ such, for example, “ as now is, or may be hereafter charged at the “ shop of the Chemist and Druggist ? ” In examining these questions, both the benefit of the Patient and the interest of the Apothecary must be kept in view.

If the Apothecary were the only prescriber, the former plan would be suitable for both parties ; no suspicion could be harboured by the patient that too much medicine would be given to him ; and the Apothecary, remaining unfettered by the dread of such a suspicion being excited, would prescribe with more freedom, and consequently with more success. His emolument, also, arising not from the quantity of medicines swallowed, a system repugnant to the feeling of every honourable mind, but from his attendance and skill, his professional importance would be very much advanced, and his fortune increase in a direct ratio to his merits ; which would, thence, become more conspicuous, and be more easily and justly appreciated by the public. Men of high respectability, and adequate learning, would then feel a gratification in

the practice of this branch of the healing art ; and substantial benefit result to the community. But, however desirable this plan is, several objections may be reasonably urged against it ; and these have swayed the Committee in rejecting it. The first objection is, that the change from the present mode of practice, if too great or sudden, would not be relished by the public ; and, for the Apothecary to be paid with a fee only would be imitating too closely the fashion of the Physician, which is neither desirable nor becoming. To render such a plan practicable, also, a scale of fees would be required, adapted to the different ranks of society, which would in many instances be extremely disgusting, and in almost all of very difficult application. In a pecuniary point of view such a mode of paying the Apothecary would prove, also, highly disadvantageous to him, as many people would be deterred or prevented from consulting him in ordinary cases, and even in acute diseases medical assistance would frequently not be sought for till too late for much good to be effected.

The plan which has been adopted by the Committee provides, that the Apothecary shall have a legal claim for a *moderate fee*, as a reward for his attendance and skill ; and that the medicines

he provides shall, also, be charged for, but at a reduced rate. By this plan the Public will not feel outraged by too violent or sudden a change; and as the expences of patients will scarcely exceed what they now are, the fact will soon be obvious, that "it is the present mode more" than the amount of remuneration," which is objectionable. With regard to the Apothecary himself, it is expected that the moderation of his fee will not diminish the frequency of reference, and as he will be certain of some remuneration for his time and skill, the *Trade* must necessarily become subordinate to the *Profession*.

It is proposed to leave the power of fixing the rates of charges in both cases with the Superintending and District Committees: to be alterable, of course, as the nature of the times may require. A hint has been thrown out, that as there is no check provided, there can be no dependence on the moderation of the Committee, which may therefore abuse its trust to the disadvantage of the community. But I reply, that a Committee chiefly composed of men actually in practice, and depending for their support on the countenance and approbation of the Public, must ever be sensible that moderation alone will insure that support; and, thence, this will always operate as a sufficient check on their

avarice. The Committee will have also within itself a controlling power beneficial to the Public ; the interests of the Physicians and Surgeons being obviously different from those of the Apothecary.

Having now, Sir, concluded what I had to offer on this part of my subject, I trust I have satisfactorily proved, that the right of the Apothecary and Surgeon-Apothecary to attend the sick and undertake the cure of diseases, is established by imperative necessity ; that the interest of the Public, as well as the credit of that description of Practitioner, demands, that, for this important charge, he should, before commencing practice, give proofs, on examination, of being qualified ; and that the present mode of remuneration is highly objectionable, in as much as it places the Apothecary on a level with the Tradesman or Dealer, while by his education and practice he must be acknowledged as an active, and most useful member of a learned and liberal Profession. In what I have advanced, it has, also, been my endeavour to show, that, while the Apothecary will be materially benefited by the proposed reform, no injury can accrue to the Physician ; and that the higher qualification, and advancement in public confidence of the Apothecary, is by no means incompatible with

the interests of the well-educated Physician, who must ever retain that enviable superiority which has been conceded to him by the Profession, and acknowledged by the rest of mankind; a situation, which must acquit those who enjoy it of all *illiberality, selfishness, and jealousy, either as individuals or as a body*; which presupposes a *parental feeling for every other branch of the Profession*; and a *disregard of every thing but the general interests of Medical Science*.—But to proceed—

II. *Whether will the proposed alterations injure the Compounding and Dispensing Chemist and Druggist?*

Although it would be no difficult task to shew that the function of compounding Physicians' prescriptions and dispensing medicine, now generally assumed by the Retail Chemist and Druggist, is of very recent date, and an encroachment on the trading department of the occupation of the regular Apothecary; yet, as it has been established and is now confirmed by the countenance of the Public, it is not my intention to use a single argument against the propriety of its continuance. It is but justice, however, to state, that by this traffic of the Druggist, a considerable source of profit has

been wrested from the Apothecary. A door has, also, been opened for abuse in the coalescence of interests which occasionally are arranged between the Physician and the Druggist, to the serious detriment of the Public: the former accommodating his prescriptions so as to augment the profits of the latter, who in return exerts all his influence to extend the practice of his patron, by earnest recommendation to his customers: an instance is, even, on public record of the existence of a direct partnership of two Physicians and a Compounding Druggist*. That such shameful contracts are very rare, and unknown among respectable Physicians, I am perfectly willing and ready to admit; but, that some Physicians, even in the Metropolis, have condescended to form such connections, is a fact which cannot be denied. Nothing farther, however, is intended by this statement than merely to notice the fact, to show how a door for abuse may be opened; and to leave it for the judgment of the Public.

The Committee has not considered an interference with the compounding of Medicines by

* See notice of a dissolution of copartnership of the firm of Paytherus and Co., which took place on the 31st of December 1805—inserted in the *London Gazette*, *Tuesday June 30, 1807*, p. 885.

Druggists as at all essential to the object they have in contemplation ; further than to take such steps as may insure their being properly prepared, and thereby to protect the safety of that part of the Community who have their medicines thus supplied. This they have conceived to be their duty, as Professional Men ; as men who are appealing to the Public for its protection, on the plea of rendering more perfect one branch of that Profession, which is intended to secure to them the possession of health, the greatest of terrestrial blessings. To satisfy the Public that such an interference is absolutely necessary, the Committee might publish the numerous documents which they have in their hands, as evidence of the extreme ignorance and inefficiency of a very great number of Compounding Chemists and Druggists, particularly in the country. But it has been one of their leading principles of action to descend to nothing that can injure, or even hurt the feelings of individuals ; to strike at the roots of general evils only ; and, prospectively, to prevent those errors, negligences, and abuses under which the Public has long suffered, not only in their own department of the Profession, but in the minor trading branches of medicine. I may, however, state, that it is within my own personal knowledge, that men have opened Chemists and Druggists

shops in this Metropolis, who are utterly ignorant of Chemistry*, and could not, when they commenced business, distinguish a genuine from a spurious drug; who could not even translate the directions on the prescriptions which they compounded, and were forced to apply to a neighbouring Surgeon-Apothecary for that purpose. These very men, nevertheless, are now in very extensive business; and every one of them compound, annually, as many Physicians' prescriptions as yield a profit, which alone would be regarded as a handsome income by any Apothecary, or Surgeon-Apothecary, not in the first class of practice in London; and, yet, these Compounders have no responsibility, nor even ordinary labour, further than putting together, by the medium of their journeymen and apprentices, the materials of the formulæ they supply, sufficient to authorize the large profits they obtain. It is even known to be "an incontrovertible fact that, independent of the varieties of the same materials, varieties of

* It is but justice to mention, that a few truly philosophical and excellent Practical Chemists are to be found among the Chemists and Druggists. It is necessary only to mention the names of *Phillips* and *Hume*, men to whose deserved reputation no testimony of mine can add any weight, and whose best eulogy is the public estimation of their acknowledged talents.

“ different value, which they keep continually in
 “ their warehouses, and to which they have re-
 “ course as circumstances require.” Very many
 Druggists do not “ compound the preparations
 “ of the Pharmacopœia of the College of Phy-
 “ sicians, in all instances consistently with the
 “ express injunctions of the Pharmacopœia.
 “ On the contrary, they have nearly all of
 “ them nostrums and receipts of their own, from
 “ which those preparations are compounded ;
 “ preparations, indeed, which may pass under
 “ the respective titles given in the Pharmaco-
 “ pœia, and which, in general, may elude the
 “ eye by a similarity of colour, and, sometimes,
 “ even the tongue by a similarity of taste ; but
 “ which are, in all instances, infinitely less effi-
 “ cacious, and are only compounded in a diffe-
 “ rent and clandestine manner, because they
 “ can thus be compounded much cheaper, or
 “ with more ease*.”

It is an anomaly in the general conduct
 of the Public, that the high charge for me-
 dicines made up from Physicians' prescriptions,
 by Chemists and Druggists, has been so long
 tolerated and encouraged, when the charge of
 Apothecaries, as ADAM SMITH observes, “ is

* Good's *History of Medicine*, so far as relates to the
Profession of the Apothecary ; 2d edit. p. 187.

“ become a bye-word denoting something uncommonly extravagant*.” The profit of the Apothecary, however, as must appear evident to every one who reflects on the subject, differs very widely from that of the Dispensing Chemist and Druggist. It is only apparently great, being the sole reward which he can claim for his professional skill and labour; or, to use the words of the above-mentioned celebrated philosopher, “ is real wages disguised in the garb of profit†.” But the profit of the Compounding Druggist is real exorbitant profit, on the simple sale of the commodity, of the value of which the Public is incapable of judging.

The Chemist and Druggist is, nevertheless, not content with the enormous profits on the medicines he compounds from Physicians' prescriptions: He has dared to invade the province of the Profession, and, assuming the character of the Apothecary, to prescribe for the sick, as if the weighing out of jalap and salts, and compounding, labelling, and wrapping up draughts and mixtures, *secundum artem*, could infuse a knowledge of diseases and their remedies; or, as if Medical Education was a visionary advantage, and the practice of the Profession but an organized sys-

* *Wealth of Nations.*

† *Ibid.*

tem of imposture. The observations of Celsus, "*Conjecturalis est ars medica*," must ever remain a truth, with all that learning and talents can affect towards perfecting it: but what epithet could be found to designate its real character, if it were left in the hands of men, who have never enjoyed any other Medical Education than what their file of prescriptions has afforded?

But, notwithstanding these evils resulting from the countenance given by Physicians and others to Compounding Chemists and Druggists, the Apothecaries have displayed no disposition to restrain them from compounding. If indeed, the endeavour to get a law enacted, to oblige them to qualify themselves for their situation, "be deeply injurious to the Chemists and Druggists who compound and dispense Medicines*:" in that, certainly, the Apothecaries have offended. And I will not dispute that it may be more profitable and advantageous for Chemists and Druggists to compound prescriptions after their own fashion, and with materials of their own invention, than in a correct manner, and with the materials ordered in the Pharmacopœia: but I will contend, that the

* *Resolutions of Druggists, l. c.*

reverse of that part of their resolutions, which states, that the Public, also, will be deeply injured by the proposed enactment, must be admitted as the truth. The same remark will apply to their assertion, that the proposed regulations "will increase the price of medicines." On the contrary, as the charge for medicines by the Apothecary will be reduced, the Chemist and Druggist, also, must necessarily reduce their prices; and the Public consequently be gainers. The Committee, under the controul of which they dread being placed, is, also, improperly designated a Committee of Apothecaries, as it is proposed, that it shall partly consist of the principal officers of the three already-constituted Medical Bodies; and it is not likely, that such a mixed body, the interests of each of the component parts of which are in a great degree distinct and opposite, would concur in any act of oppression or injustice to the Druggist; or combine "to place a monopoly of the compounding and dispensing of Medicines in the hands of the Apothecaries*."

Such, Sir, are the arguments which I have to advance in reply to the question, Whether the compounding and dispensing Chemist and Druggist will be injured by the proposed ar-

* *Resolutions of Meeting of Druggists, l. c.*

rangements? and, I trust, they are sufficient to show, that unless the Chemist and Druggist can be injured by being obliged to qualify himself for the duties of his situation, the pending Bill does not in any other way affect his interests. But I cannot close my remarks on this part of my subject, without drawing the attention of the Public to the degree of ingratitude displayed in the opposition which this body of men are making to the Bill; in as much as the very individuals whose interests they are opposing, particularly the Country Practitioners, are the chief support of their wholesale business. It is an opposition unprovoked and illiberal; and which, although it cannot benefit them, yet, may injure, to a certain degree, those against whom it is directed. Whether this be good policy in the Chemists and Druggists? or, whether the patronage of the Physician will compensate them for the loss of the orders of the Apothecary? are questions, which time only can determine.

It now only remains to examine the third query proposed: *What benefit will the Public receive from the change?*

The greater part of the answer to this question has been anticipated in the foregoing

remarks. 1. The necessity for the established practice of the Apothecary and Surgeon-Apothecary as an attendant and prescriber for the sick, having been shewn, it, consequently, follows that the Public must benefit by whatever confers a superior professional qualification on that description of Practitioner. 2. It has been shown that the disrepute of the present state of the above mentioned branch of the Profession has evidently arisen from the assumption of its functions by ignorant persons and pretenders, owing to the want of a Superintending Body to protect its interests; and, therefore, the supplying this defect must be productive of public benefit, in as much as it will insure a future succession of well educated Practitioners. 3. That, although, the complaint of the Public against the superabundance of medicines dispensed by the Apothecary be justly founded; yet, that this has arisen, altogether, from the Practitioner having no other mode of obtaining an adequate recompence for his attendance and professional skill. This circumstance has long been deeply regretted by every honourable and conscientious mind, as discreditable to the Profession and disadvantageous to the Public: and, therefore, the securing a legal claim of moderate remuneration to the Practitioner, independent of the medicines he supplies, will be more consonant to his profes-

sional character, and at the same time highly beneficial to the Public. And, 4. That the provisions of the proposed Bill being extended over England and Wales, the good of the whole Community is thereby embraced.

With these public benefits in view, the Committee commenced their labours ; and, as they had early evinced their determination, not to admit any thing as an object for their consideration, however advantageous it might appear, that would in any degree encroach upon the rights or privileges of the already constituted Medical Bodies, and had expressed that determination, in a communication to each of these Bodies*, the kind of opposition which has been raised, particularly that of the Royal College of Physicians, could not have been anticipated.

The opposition of the College of Surgeons, and of the Compounding and Dispensing Chemists and Druggists, being founded on misapprehension, must, eventually, cease, when the clauses of the proposed Bill, which appear to them to contain matter detrimental to their interests, are explained or modified. But the opposition of the Learned College, over which you

* See Appendix (A), No. I.

preside, being directed against the supposed principles of the Bill, it cannot be expected to be dropped, whatever change or modification the clauses may undergo. Of the spirit which dictated this opposition, I shall leave the Public to judge, from the objections set forth in the petition of the College to Parliament*. I must, however, reserve to myself the right of commenting freely on these objections; and shewing, that it is not impossible for even a learned and scientific body to advance complaints against visionary matter of offence; for the Bill cannot, yet, be fairly said to exist; and to brand, as injurious to their rights and privileges, that which hath not, yet, attained a single legitimate characteristic feature of either good or evil. To explain this statement, it is requisite to mention, that a Bill, in order to save time, and get it passed in the current session, may be hurried into Parliament in a very crude state; for the title being the only part read, at what is termed the first reading of the Bill, it is the only part required to be identically the same at its second reading, and before it passes into the Committee. Such was the case with the Bill in question; and, this would have been stated to the learned College, if it had

* See Appendix (D).

condescended to demand an exposition of the ultimate views of the Committee, before so hastily petitioning the Legislature against them : but, as no explanation was demanded, the Committee is perfectly free from any charge of having, in any manner, contributed to produce the consequence, which may result from the mode of proceeding adopted by the College.

The first objection stated in the Petition, that the “said Bill appears to them not calculated to attain the object it professes to have in view, or likely to produce any effects beneficial to the Public,” is already answered by what has been just mentioned regarding the present form of the Bill. It is, indeed, utterly impossible to pronounce how far it is likely to attain its object, or to be beneficial or hurtful to the Public, until it be, finally, settled what are the means which it has to propose for attaining that object. The Abstract was circulated expressly to elicit criticism and obtain the opinions of the District Meetings, and, also, of individual Practitioners in every part of the kingdom : and it is from the remarks sent to the Committee, and the *viva voce* opinions of the Deputies, who are about to meet the London Committee, that the Bill will be actually framed, and receive its characteristic stamp.

The second objection that it "would injure the rights and privileges of the Petitioners," is not more entitled to attention than the former, as it is by no means certain, that the Bill may contain a single provision which will admit of such a construction. If, indeed, by the expression, "rights and privileges," is meant the sole right of the Physician to attend on and prescribe for the sick; it is only necessary to refer to the commencement of this Letter, and to observe, that that right, in the Apothecary, has been, as was already stated, confirmed by custom, and acknowledged not only by the Legislature, but even by the College of Physicians. To found a claim, therefore, on the Act of Henry the Eighth, which has been rendered obsolete by the concurrence of the College itself, is a proof how difficult it has been to find any thing, even in the undigested abstract and crude sketch of the Bill, which could be regarded as infringing upon the real privileges of your Learned Body.

With regard to the reasons which your Petition assigns for the powers conferred on the Royal College by its Charter "of overseeing, ruling, and governing the Faculty of Physic;" viz. "for the benefit and protection of the Community;" I would ask you, Sir, as the organ

of that Learned Body, In what manner have these powers been exercised, either by the advancement of Physic, or the protection of the Public Health? Have they restrained from practice a single pretender, however illiterate or assuming? Have they fostered genius, or raised merit to its proper rank in the Profession*? Have they put down Quackery; or taken any step to prevent the sale of even a packet of the ten thousand nostrums, which are daily imposed upon that Community for whose "benefit and protection" these powers were given? Has the conduct of the College towards that association, which came laudably forward, some years ago, with a Plan for Medical Reform, proved its parental care for the general good of the Profession? On the contrary, was not the Plan it suggested, intended rather to crush that which was proposed by Dr. Harrison, than to be acted upon? and did not the adjournment of its consideration, proceed rather from the private influence of the Members of the College, than a conviction of its futility on the mind of the Minister? I would willingly have avoided asking these questions; but is it to be borne, that the interests of so large, and deserving a body

* Neither SYDENHAM nor HUNTER were ever raised above the rank of Licentiates.

of men, as the Apothecaries and Surgeon-Apothecaries are, should be sacrificed to a jealousy of ancient rights, which have been exercised with so little benefit, either to the Community or the Profession? Indeed, from the private sentiments expressed by many individuals of your Learned Body, for whose judgment, honour, and probity, I must ever entertain the highest respect and veneration; and from the open and liberal manner in which the Committee communicated their plans to the College, I confess I was unreasonable enough to suppose, that they might expect not only the advice, but the patronage of that Learned Body in an application to the Legislature—"O spes fallaces! O cogitationes inanēs meæ!" I had, yet, to learn that the private opinions of individuals are often in direct opposition to those of the Corporate Body to which they may belong; and that men of the most liberal and enlightened sentiments, without the walls of a College, do not blush to lend their support to acts even of injustice and oppression, within its precincts; pleading their apology by pointing to precedents in its annals, and thus, as it were, "quoting Scripture for the deed*."

* For the truth of this remark it is only necessary to state, that the selfishness and oppression for which the College was so, justly, stigmatized in the publications of Drs. Badger, Ferris, Stanger, and Wells, still regulate its conduct towards the licenciates.

I might, now, Sir, close my letter by reiterating the sentiments of the Committee, expressed by our Chairman in his last communication to your Solicitor, "that the Committee deeply regret they cannot obtain either the concurrence or the *opinion* of the College upon the measure now submitted to Parliament." But, as an individual, warmly interested for the general welfare of the Profession, I cannot conclude without calling upon the Royal College, through you, to reconsider, seriously, the consequences of the opposition they are supporting. To reflect that, although it should, now, prove successful, the impulse which this struggle has given to the energies of the Apothecaries, will most assuredly produce future, and more strenuous exertions to burst the chains with which they have been too long ignominiously fettered. And how much more creditable would it be to the College, spontaneously to do an act of liberality, than afterwards to be forced into the measure. But, even, now, having laid their grievances before Parliament; and relying on the fairness and moderation of their views; on their anxiety to advance their claims to public confidence only by a higher degree of qualification; on the very nature of their employment, which at all times requires that their personal and social comforts be sacrificed at the calls of their patients; on

the national importance of their Body, as the source whence the young men intended for the medical services of the Army and Navy draw the rudiments of their professional education ; and on the fact, that as they form the great majority of the Medical Practitioners of England and Wales, the health of the mass of the population is entrusted to them ; they ardently anticipate that redress from the wisdom of the Legislature, which the justice of their appeal leads them to contemplate.

With every sentiment of personal respect,
I remain,

SIR,

Your obedient humble Servant,

ONE OF THE COMMITTEE.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

(A.)

No. I.

COPY of a letter directed to Sir Francis Milman, Bart. President, &c. and to the Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians.

GENTLEMEN,

The Committee appointed by a General Meeting of the Apothecaries of England and Wales, held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, on Friday the 20th of November 1812, to carry into effect certain Resolutions then agreed to, beg leave to transmit to you a Copy of their Report, with the Resolutions subjoined, as approved of by that Meeting.

The Committee are of opinion that the management of the sick should be as much as possible under the superintendence of the Physician; but as in a very great majority of cases the assistance and skill of the Apothecary must be relied upon, no one should be allowed to practise as an Apothecary without having previously submitted to a suitable examination.

The Committee suggest that there be a distinct privileged Body established by the authority of Parliament for such examination, and to superintend the general Professional Interests of Apothecaries and Surgeon-Apothecaries throughout England and Wales, insuring by this means the better preservation of the public health. By the authority to be vested in the

proposed Superintending Body, the Apothecary will be required to be universally well qualified, and be thus rendered more worthy of public confidence. The Committee, therefore, submit, that he should possess a legal claim to moderate remuneration for his attendance and Professional Skill, under such modifications as may hereafter be judged proper.

The Committee are satisfied that any measures, which may be considered as calculated to promote their views, must be confirmed by an Act of the Legislature, which will, unavoidably, be attended with considerable expence. They have, consequently, made it a primary object, and provided such a fund, as will, in their estimation, be adequate to that purpose.

The Committee are desirous to obtain the sanction and concurrence of the legally-constituted Bodies of the Profession; and they wish it to be distinctly understood, that they are extremely anxious that the Regulations to be proposed shall, in no degree, interfere with their established privileges.

They have, therefore, determined to address the Royal College of Surgeons, and the Society of Apothecaries, at the same time with yourselves; and trust that they shall receive your countenance and support in a Petition to Parliament for the Protection and Regulation of the Practice of the Apothecary.

Signed by desire of the Committee,

G. M. BURROWS,
CHAIRMAN.

Bloomsbury Square,

Dec. 11th, 1813.

Note. A similar letter was addressed to Thompson Forster, Esq. Master, &c. and to the Governors and

Court of Assistants of the Royal College of Surgeons : and another with the latter paragraph omitted, and the following paragraph substituted, to the Master, Wardens, and Court of Assistants of the Society of Apothecaries.

They have, therefore, determined to address the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons at the same time with yourselves.

But as the major part of the Members of your Society have the same general interests as other Apothecaries, and can appreciate more correctly the extent of their grievances, the Committee trust their application to you will be favourably received and countenanced.

With such approbation they will be enabled more confidently to call upon the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons to unite in a Petition to Parliament for the Protection and Regulation of the Practice of the Apothecary.

Signed by the desire of the Committee,
G. M. BURROWS,
CHAIRMAN.

Bloomsbury Square,
Dec. 11th, 1812.

No. II.

A letter to Sir Francis Milman, Bart. President of the
Royal College of Physicians.
(Copy.)

Bloomsbury Square,
Dec. 25, 1812.

SIR,

As Chairman of the Committee elected by a General Meeting of the Apothecaries of England and Wales, I was instructed to direct the Report and

Resolutions of that Meeting, with a letter from the Committee to the President and Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians.

Conformably with those instructions, I had the honour to send to you, as the President, the printed Report of the Meeting; and the letter of the Committee, signed by me as Chairman, on the 15th instant, for you, officially, to submit to the Fellows.

It has been intimated, that my letter, with the Report, may be considered by the College a private communication to you; but though this appears to me improbable, yet, to prevent so erroneous an impression, I take the liberty of addressing you again as President; to request that you will lay the said letter, with the Report, before the Royal College of Physicians at their next Meeting, and that you will condescend to give orders that the Committee be favoured with an early answer.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

G. M. BURROWS,

CHAIRMAN.

No. III.

SIR,

Brook-Street, Dec. 25, 1812.

I had the honour of your letter of the 11th, and I have this moment received your favour of this day's date. I understood your first letter to have been only a circular form, of which you had addressed Copies to a considerable number of my brethren, as you expressed a determination to address the Royal College of Surgeons and the Society of the Apothe-

caries at the same time with the College of Physicians; I waited for the execution of this declared purpose, and expected to receive your intended formal application, with your commands to lay it before the College, which I would have obeyed with great pleasure on the 22nd of this month, the usual day of our meeting. No such document having reached me, I thought it possible the Committee might have altered the Resolution they had formed; and not being particularly desired to do so, I did not deem myself justified in laying your first letter before the gentlemen assembled on the 22nd in Warwick Lane. Should it continue to be the wish of your Committee, I will take the first opportunity of a meeting of the College to lay your letters before them.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

F. MILMAN.

To G. M. Burrows, Esq.

No. IV.

Bloomsbury-Square,

Dec. 26, 1812.

SIR,

Accept my acknowledgements for the distinguished attention with which you honoured my letter of yesterday, by your answer of the same date.

The letter of the 11th instant, which I subscribed and sent by desire of the Committee of Apothecaries, was directed to the President and Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians. The Committee, therefore, could not conceive it essential to request a letter to be laid before your Learned Colleagues, which was expressly addressed to them as well as to you, Sir, their

President; and which they consequently imagined would be presented, as a matter of course, at the Meeting of the College on the 22nd of December.

The Report was sent as a mark of respect to every Member of the Executives of the Medical Bodies to whom the Committee were directed to apply, by the Fifth Resolution of the General Meeting of Apothecaries, held November 20th; but the letter of the Committee was intended as the specific application, and was particular, and not general or circular.

May I take the liberty of soliciting that you will be pleased to inform me when the Meeting of the College will take place, to which you propose submitting the letter of the 11th instant, that I may communicate your reply to the Committee.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

G. M. BURROWS,

CHAIRMAN.

To Sir F. Milman, Bart.

*President of the Royal
College of Physicians.*

No. V.

Bloomsbury-Square,

Dec. 26, 1812.

SIR,

The letter from the Committee of Apothecaries subscribed by me, dated December 11th, and addressed to you as the Master, and to the Governors and Court of the Royal College of Surgeons, I request you will lay before the College, at their first Meeting, if that be not already done; and I further take the

liberty to express my hope, that you will return an answer as soon as the necessary forms admit.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

G. M. BURROWS,

To Thompson Forster, Esq.

CHAIRMAN.

Master of the Royal

College of Surgeons.

No. VI.

Southampton Street, Bloomsbury,

December 28th, 1812.

Mr. Forster's respects to Mr. Burrows, and begs leave to mention that he laid his letter from the Committee of Apothecaries before the Court of Examiners on the 18th instant; that Court not being competent to the taking it into consideration, it was referred over to the first General Court of Assistants of the College of Surgeons.

To G. M. Burrows, Esq.

*Chairman of the Com-
mittee of Apothecaries.*

No. VII.

Bloomsbury-Square,

SIR,

Jan. 1, 1813.

The Committee of the Apothecaries of England and Wales have been made acquainted with the correspondence which has taken place with you, relative to their letter of the 11th of December, direct-

ed to the President and Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians.

I have the honour to inform you, that they are extremely concerned to find it was not presented at their Meeting, on the 22nd, agreeably to their intentions. The Committee therefore make it their particular request, that it may be submitted to the College.

As I have not yet been favoured with an answer to the question with which I closed my letter of the 26th, the Committee beg leave most respectfully to suggest their wish, that you may think it right to call a Meeting of the College at an early period, for the purpose of taking their letter of the 11th into consideration.

The Committee, with great deference, venture this proposal ; but further delay will be attended with material inconvenience, as it may prevent the passing of a Bill through Parliament during the present Session.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

G. M. BURROWS,

CHAIRMAN.

To Sir F. Milman, Bart.
President of the Royal
College of Physicians.

No. VIII.

SIR,

Brook Street, Jan. 2, 1813.

The ordinary Meeting of the College will be on the 12th of next April ; but finding that it is the wish of the Committee of Apothecaries that their Report should be submitted to the College of Physicians at an early period ; I will take the first con-

venient opportunity (which I hope will occur in this month) to lay it before them.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

F. MILMAN.

To G. M. Burrows, Esq.

Bloomsbury Square.

No. IX.

Apothecaries-Hall,

SIR,

Dec. 30, 1812.

I am desired by the Master and Wardens of the Society of Apothecaries, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter as Chairman of the Committee appointed by a General Meeting of the Apothecaries of England and Wales, on Friday the 20th of November last, which, together with the Report of the said Committee, were laid before a Court of Assistants on the 22nd instant, when it was resolved, that its farther consideration should be deferred till they had obtained the opinion of the Royal College of Physicians on the same subject, which it appears by your letter has been submitted to them.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

S. BACKLER, C. K.

*Mr. G. M. Burrows, Chairman of
the Committee appointed by a
General Meeting of the Apothe-
caries of England and Wales,
&c. &c. &c.*

No. X.

Royal College of Surgeons,

SIR,

Jan. 18, 1813.

I have laid before the Court of Assistants your Letter of the 11th, addressed to the Master, Governors, and Court of Assistants of this College, from the Committee appointed by a General Meeting of the Apothecaries of England and Wales, held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, on Friday the 20th of November 1812, together with a Copy of the Report of the Committee, and the Resolutions of such General Meeting of the 20th of November; and am directed to inform you, that the Court of Assistants does not intend to interfere with the subject of such Letter.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

E. BELFOUR, SEC.

G. M. Burrows, Esq.

No. XI.

Bloomsbury Square,

SIR,

Jan. 21, 1813.

The Committee of Apothecaries having sketched a Plan, which, upon mature deliberation, they consider adapted to the objects they have in view, respectfully beg leave to inclose a few copies of its outlines, which they hope you will take the trouble to lay before the other Members of the Royal College of Physicians.

If the request with which they concluded their Letter to the College of the 11th of December be

assented to, the Committee will instantly submit the details of their Plan for the consideration and approbation of yourself and the Fellows, as it is their anxious desire to postpone their final arrangements until the last moment, to give all possible time for the decision of the College to be declared and received.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

G. M. BURROWS,

CHAIRMAN.

To Sir F. Milman, Bart.

*President of the Royal
College of Physicians.*

No. XII.

Royal College of Physicians,

Jan. 22, 1813.

SIR,

I am directed to enclose you a copy of a Resolution passed at a Meeting of the College this day ; viz.

The College of Physicians cannot entertain the proposals from the London Committee naming themselves the Committee of Apothecaries of England and Wales, for improving and protecting the Profession of the Apothecary, Surgeon-Apothecary, and Practitioner in Midwifery, until they shall have received some official communications on the subject from the other Chartered Bodies, which are more immediately interested in the Proposals.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

G. M. Burrows, Esq.

J. HERVEY, REG.

Bloomsbury-Square.

No. XIII.

THE following NOTE was sent with the Outlines of the proposed Plan to the Royal College of Surgeons, and to the Society of Apothecaries.

The Committee of Apothecaries beg leave to present to the
of the of Copies of the
Outlines of their proposed Plan, for improving and
protecting the Profession of the Apotheeary, Surgeon-
Apothecary, and Practitioner of Midwifery, in Eng-
land and Wales.

W. T. WARD, SEC.

Holles-Street, Jan. 22, 1813.

Bloomsbury-Square,

GENTLEMEN,

Jan. 27, 1813.

The Answers of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons to the Letters of the Committee of Apothecaries of England and Wales, of Dec. 11th ultimo, were last night submitted to the Committee.

At the request of the Committee, I have the honour to enclose to the Master, Wardens, and Court of Assistants of the Society of Apothecaries, Copies of those Answers.

As the time for applying to Parliament is so near as the 2nd of February, the Committee take the liberty of soliciting, if there be no competent Court held in the interim, that the Master would have the goodness to summona Special Court, to take the said Answers of

the Royal Colleges, and the Application of the Committee, into consideration.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

G. M. BURROWS,

*To the Master, Wardens, and
Court of Assistants of the
Society of Apothecaries.*

CHAIRMAN.

No. XV.

Bloomsbury-Square,

SIR,

Jan. 28, 1813.

I have laid before the Committee of Apothecaries the Resolution of the Royal College of Physicians of the 22d instant, in Answer to their Letter dated December 11, 1812, and communicated to me by the Registrar of the College on the 24th.

The Committee beg leave to present you with Copies of the Answers returned by the Royal College of Surgeons, and the Society of Apothecaries, to the aforesaid letter, which the Committee request you will do them the honour to lay before the Royal College of Physicians.

The Committee immediately submitted a copy of the Resolution of the College of Physicians to the Master, Wardens, and Court of Assistants of the Society of Apothecaries.

The Committee respectfully suggest to the President and the Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians, that the two other chartered Medical Bodies, to whom the College of Physicians refer as more immediately interested in the Proposals for improving and

protecting the Profession of the Apothecary, Surgeon-Apothecary, and Practitioner in Midwifery, have in their Answers most unequivocally acknowledged the Body which has addressed the three chartered Medical Bodies as a Committee, elected at a Meeting of the Apothecaries of England and Wales.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

G. M. BURROWS,

CHAIRMAN.

To Sir F. Milman, Bart.

*President of the Royal
College of Physicians.*

No. XVI.

SIR,

Brook-Street, Jan. 31, 1813.

I have received your letter of the 28th of January, inclosing copies of letters to you from the Royal College of Surgeons and from the Society of Apothecaries. I am bound by the Resolution of the College of Physicians on the 22nd of this month, a copy of which has by their command been sent to you, to wait for communications addressed to them by the Corporate Bodies above mentioned, before I can take any further steps in this business.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

F. MILMAN.

To G. M. Burrows, Esq.

Bloomsbury-Square.

No. XVII.

Apothecaries-Hall,

Feb. 5, 1813.

SIR,

I am directed by the Master and Wardens of the Society of Apothecaries, to inform you that, in compliance with the request of your Committee, they have summoned a Special Court of Assistants, to take into consideration the Answers you have received from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons; and I am directed to send you their Resolution on that subject.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

I. BACKLER, CL.

G. M. Burrows, Esq.

Apothecaries-Hall,

Feb. 4, 1813.

AT a Special Court of Assistants held this instant:—

“ RESOLVED — That this Court, having
“ taken into consideration the Reply of the Royal
“ College of Physicians to a Letter addressed to them
“ from the Committee of Apothecaries of England
“ and Wales, cannot (as a Body) concur with that
“ Committee in their intended application to Par-
“ liament.”

(A Copy.)

I. BACKLER, CL.

No. XVIII.

SIR,

The College of Physicians having directed me to obtain a copy of the Bill proposed to

be brought into Parliament by the Society of Apothecaries, I applied to my friend Mr. Wells, who has been so obliging as to furnish me with the Outlines of the Plan, and to refer me to you for a copy of the Bill. I will, therefore, thank you to furnish me with a copy as soon as it is printed, or to favour me with the loan of the draft of it in the mean time, that I may lay it before the College for their consideration ; it being the wish of the Society, as I am informed by Mr. Wells, to have the concurrence of the College in their proposed Plan. I shall beg the favour to be informed when leave is given to bring in the Bill, and the progress of it, &c. and am,

Sir, your obedient Servant,

JOHN ROBERTS.

Ely Place, Feb. 18th, 1813.

To Charles Druce, Esq. Billiter Square.*

No. XIX.

Bloomsbury-Square,

SIR,

Feb. 23, 1813.

Your letter of the 18th to Mr. Druce requesting, at the desire of the College of Physicians, a copy of the Bill prepared to be brought into Parliament, has been sent to me; and I have, herewith, the pleasure of forwarding the printed Abstract for that purpose. I lament it has been so long delayed, but it is to-day only that I could procure it from the Printers.

* Solicitor for the Committee of Apothecaries and Surgeon-Apothecaries of England and Wales.

In presenting this document to you, to lay before the College, I cannot omit this or any other opportunity of expressing that the Committee of Apothecaries still entertain the same solicitude for the sanction and concurrence of the College, in the present application to Parliament, on a measure so intimately connected with the public welfare. They will at all times be ready to manifest the sincerity of their intentions; and in any way that the College will condescend to point out.

Our Solicitor, Mr. Druce, has instructions to communicate every information required by any of the Constituted Medical Bodies.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

G. M. BURROWS:

To J. Roberts, Esq.

Ely Place.

Copies of the Abstract were at the same time sent to the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, and to Apothecaries Hall.

No. XX.

MR. BURROWS presents compliments to Mr. Roberts, and begs leave to send the copy of the Bill, as settled by Counsel, and yesterday read in the House of Commons.

The Committee of Apothecaries have waited till the last moment allowed by the House for the reception of private bills, with the hope that they might have an opportunity of explaining any part that might prove objectionable to the Royal College of Physicians.

Mr. Burrows is authorised to request that Mr. Roberts will assure the President, Sir F. Milman, that the Committee deeply regret they cannot obtain either the concurrence or opinion of the College upon the measure now submitted to Parliament.

Bloomsbury-Square,

March 9, 1813.

Mr. B. hopes Mr. Roberts has received regular notice of the proceedings on the Bill from Mr. Druce.

To J. Roberts, Esq. Ely Place.

No. XXI.

A Copy of the Act, as read the first time in the House of Commons, on Monday, March 8, having been sent to each of the Corporate Medical Bodies, the following Answers were received :—

Royal College of Physicians,

SIR,

March 9, 1813.

The President desires me to inform you that he has received the Bill which you have this day inclosed : and to say, that the Collège, at their last Meeting, have determined, “ That it is the opinion of
“ the Collège, that this Bill should be opposed, and
“ that a Petition be presented to Parliament for that
“ purpose.”

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. HERVEY, REGR.

G. M. Burrows, Esq.

(B.)

THE following Clauses of the "*Outline of a Plan for an intended Bill for the better Regulation of Medical Practitioners, Chemists, Druggists, and Venders of Medicine, circulated by the Royal College of Physicians of London,*" some years ago, refer to Apothecaries; and have been in a great degree interwoven into their Bill now pending in Parliament.

CLAUSE 3.—"That no Apothecary, who shall not have served a regular Apprenticeship of five years, and afterwards have attended two years in a Provincial Hospital, or one year at least in any of the hospitals of London, Dublin, or Edinburgh (except as is hereinafter provided), shall be permitted to practise as an Apothecary in the United Kingdom."

CLAUSE 4.—"That no Chemist, Druggist, or Vender of Medicine, shall be permitted to compound or dispense Medicines in a retail manner, unless he should have had the regular education of an Apothecary, or be otherwise legally authorised so to do."

CLAUSE 8.—"That Apothecaries, by their education entitled to act as such, shall be examined by their respective Corporation, or Companies, as to their qualification and ability so to do."

CLAUSE 9.—"That, in default of such Examination by proper authorities, it shall be lawful for the Physician of the District to call any Apothe-

cary before him, and, with the assistance of two Assessors, being Apothecaries properly educated and authorised to act as Apothecaries, to examine him, touching his medicinal, pharmaceutical, and chemical knowledge."

CLAUSE 19.—"That the District Physician shall be empowered to grant Licences to all such Surgeons, Apothecaries, Chemists, Druggists, and Venders of Medicines, as shall have been examined as aforesaid, settled within his limits, and who may not by proper authorities be otherwise privileged to act in their respective professions or occupations; that he shall exhibit to the Clerk of the Peace, or other proper officer, at the General Quarter Sessions, a List of such Surgeons, Apothecaries, Chemists, Druggists, and Venders of Medicine, with their respective residences, as appear to him to be qualified to act in their several branches, in order that the clerk, or other officer, may receive the payment of their annual Licence from all such as, by especial authority and privilege, are not exempted therefrom; and that he shall transmit a similar List to the College of Physicians."

CLAUSE 20.—"That each person for his annual Licence shall pay two pounds two shillings, and one shilling to the Clerk of the Peace for registering and inserting a notification of the same in a List to be published after the Summer Assizes in the county newspapers."

CLAUSE 22.—"That persons acting in any of the departments of Medicine without licence or authority, shall forfeit thirty pounds."

CLAUSE 23.—“ That all incompetent persons shall be refused Licences.”

CLAUSE 25.—“ That England be divided into sixteen districts.”

(C.)

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the Apothecaries, Surgeon - Apothecaries, and Practitioners in Midwifery, whose Names are hereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves and the other Apothecaries, Surgeon-Apothecaries, and Practitioners in Midwifery, of England and Wales,

SHEWETH,

That your Petitioners form the great majority of the Medical Practitioners of England and Wales, and are therefore necessarily entrusted with the medical and surgical care of the great mass of the Population of the Kingdom:

That none of the above branches of the Profession can be practised with safety, much less with benefit to the Community, unless the Practitioners acquire

competent knowledge by some regular medical education :

That there is no existing Law to prevent persons practising in any or all of the above branches without any proper medical education ; and great numbers of persons therefore in every part of the kingdom assume the character, and exercise the functions of the Apothecary, Surgeon-Apothecary, and Practitioner in Midwifery, who are wholly ignorant and utterly incompetent to the exercise of the duties of the Profession, and the safety and the health of the Community is thereby greatly endangered, and the general character of the Profession disgraced and brought into disrepute, and the interests of your Petitioners greatly injured :

That in consequence of this degradation of the character and serious injury to the interest of the professions of Apothecary, Surgeon-Apothecary, and Practitioner in Midwifery, few Apprentices are now obtained, and the general state of the Profession is progressively becoming worse :

That the Medical Departments attached to His Majesty's Army and Navy, which have been principally supplied with Practitioners brought up under those Members of the Profession, have already suffered and are likely still more to suffer :

That it is essential to the preservation of the character of the Profession, and to the interest of the Community at large, that provision should be made for remedying the above evils :

That your Petitioners could not apply to this Honourable House upon a subject of such extensive influence upon the interests of the Profession and Public, without communicating with every part of the kingdom, and also particularly with the College of

Physicians and the Public Bodies in any manner connected with the superintendence of the education of persons intended for the Medical Profession, and have from the nature and extent, and unforeseen delays of such intercourse, been unable to apply to this Honourable House within the period prescribed for presenting Petitions :

Your Petitioners therefore most humbly pray, that leave may be given to present a Petition for leave to bring in a Bill for the Regulation of the Practice of Apothecaries, and Surgeon-Apothecaries, and Practitioners in Midwifery, under such regulations and restrictions, and in such manner, as to this Honourable House may seem meet.

(D.)

*To the Right Honourable the Commons of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Ireland in Parliament assembled.*

The Petition of the President and College
of the Faculty of Physic in London,

SHEWETH,

That in the tenth year of the reign of His Majesty King Henry the Eighth, a Charter of Incorporation was granted to certain persons therein named, under

the title of President and College of the Faculty of Physic in London, with divers powers, privileges, and authorities, for the purpose of overseeing, ruling, and governing the Faculty of Physic; and which Charter was afterwards confirmed by an Act of Parliament passed in the fourteenth and fifteenth years of the reign of his said Majesty King Henry the Eighth :

That your Petitioners have seen a Bill depending in this Honourable House for regulating the Practice of Apothecaries, Surgeon-Apothecaries, and Practitioners in Midwifery, and Compounders and Dispensers of Medicine throughout England and Wales :

That your Petitioners beg leave to represent to this Honourable House, that the said Bill appears to them not calculated to attain the objects it professes to have in view, nor likely to produce any effects beneficial to the Public, but would injure the rights and privileges of your Petitioners, which are exercised for the benefit and protection of the Community :

Your Petitioners therefore pray that they may be heard by their Counsel or Agents against the said Bill, and that the same may not pass into a Law.

By order of the College,

(L. S.)

J. HERVEY, M. D.

REGISTRAR.

(E.)

AN ADDRESS,

Explanatory of the motives of the present application to Parliament by the APOTHECARIES and SURGEON-APOTHECARIES.

A BILL having been introduced into Parliament, "For regulating the Practice of Apothecaries, Surgeon-Apothecaries, and Practitioners of Midwifery, and of all Compounders and Dispensers of Medicines, throughout England and Wales," the Committee, who were appointed by a General Meeting of Apothecaries convened by Public Advertisement, and authorized to adopt such measures as should appear best calculated for securing the above objects, feel it an incumbent duty to publish a very brief statement of their views.

In doing this, they must remark, that every branch of the Medical Profession, liberally and scientifically practised, is an honourable and useful occupation; and that the public good demands that it should be exercised upon such principles.

Apothecaries and Surgeon-Apothecaries are the most numerous class of Medical Practitioners: their duties are of very serious and universal interest, the lives and health of by far the greater part of the Community being entirely confided to their care, without in many instances the possibility of obtaining other advice; yet they are allowed to practise without any Examination or Test of their competence whatever; so that any Person, however destitute of Medical

or even common Education, may assume with impunity the character and functions of the Apothecary. This is a great source of evil both to society and themselves, and the necessity of preventing it by the establishment of adequate regulations is sufficiently obvious, and universally allowed. The Royal College of Physicians have acknowledged it, by having recently suggested a plan for its attainment.

Such an order of things could certainly never have existed were it not for the extreme difficulty of judging of the real merits of Medical men, which exposes the Public to the imposition of Pretenders, whose ignorance and confidence are generally commensurate. Hence it is surely of the highest importance that there should be some Authority for examining and deciding upon the qualifications of all Persons who may hereafter intend to practise as Apothecaries, Surgeon-Apothecaries, or Midwives, or to act as Compounders and Dispensers of Medicines.

The Committee with deference conceive that Apothecaries and Surgeon-Apothecaries are entitled to additional regard from the consideration, that the numerous Medical Practitioners required for the service of the Army, Navy, Merchants' ships, and our very extensive Colonies, chiefly derive the rudiments of their education from those branches of the Profession. It is notorious, that the public service has frequently been distressed from the small number and inefficiency of Medical Persons applying to be appointed, in consequence of few comparatively being now regularly educated under Apothecaries.

Another subject of complaint is the unfortunate mode of remuneration which custom has established—a mode which is repugnant to the feelings of every liberal and conscientious mind, and equally obnoxious to the Patient and the Practitioner. In proposing a different method, the Committee are fully aware that moderation will best insure the countenance of the Public; and therefore suggest that the present

charge for medicines shall be reduced, and that Apothecaries in future shall possess a legal claim to receive a fair compensation for their professional skill and attendance. They sincerely hope to see this plan gradually adopted, confident that its advantages will be reciprocal. It is not desired that their attendance should be made more-expensive; the contrary will often be the case. It is the mode, and not the amount of Remuneration to which they have cause to object.

The proposed manner of ascertaining the competence, and of remunerating the services of the Apothecary, and an arrangement for Medical Attendance upon Parochial Poor, which has long and loudly called for legislative interference, are the important objects to which the attention of Parliament is solicited.

The Committee are persuaded that the good of the Public and the respectability of their branch of the Profession are intimately connected, and attainable by the same means; in the pursuit of which they have sedulously and respectfully endeavoured to obtain the concurrence of the Royal College of Physicians, the Royal College of Surgeons, and of the Society of Apothecaries, upon whose rights, powers, or privileges it is well known they have no desire to encroach. The authority of the Royal College of Surgeons, as well as that of the Society of Apothecaries, embraces only the members of their own respective bodies, and does not take cognizance of their professional qualifications as Practitioners of Medicine, while the jurisdiction of each of the above bodies is confined within a circumference of ten miles round London.

A very extensive correspondence with several of the most intelligent and respectable Practitioners in every county in the Kingdom, has fully evinced their general approval of the measures in question: they, as well as those of London, are sincerely anxious to have such provisions enacted

as will promote the welfare of the Community, while they tend to lessen the embarrassments which so sensibly affect the character and interests of the Profession.

The Committee beg leave to express an implicit confidence that the object and intention, duly and impartially considered, will justify their expectation of universal approbation and support.

By desire of the Committee,

G. M. BURROWS, Chairman.

London,

March 11, 1813.

OUTLINES OF A PLAN,

PROPOSED BY

THE LONDON COMMITTEE,

For Improving and Protecting the Profession of the Apothecary, Surgeon-Apothecary, and Practitioner in Midwifery, in ENGLAND and WALES.

I. THE Provisions of the proposed Bill, so far as relates to Qualifications, will be prospective, and therefore not applicable to persons already in practice.

II. No person to be allowed to enter the Profession without having served a regular Apprenticeship, or producing Testimonials of a suitable Medical Education.

III. No person to be allowed to practise as Apothecary, Surgeon-Apothecary, or Accoucheur, without obtaining a Certificate after due examination of his Qualifications.

IV. No person to be allowed to practise in any Branch of the Profession, or to compound or dispense Medicines, without taking out an Annual Licence.

V. Every Indenture of Apprenticeship to bear a Stamp Duty, not exceeding £25.

VI. A Superintending Body to be legally constituted for the several objects of the proposed Act, with power to make such By-Laws and Regulations as may be necessary to carry them into effect.

VII. England and Wales to be divided into a certain Number of Medical Districts; of which London shall be the Superior, and where only Certificates for Qualifications can be obtained.

VIII. Assistants to undergo an Examination.

IX. There shall be a legal Right for Apothecaries, Surgeon-Apothecaries, and Accoucheurs to claim a moderate charge for attendance, as Visits or Journeys, that for Medicines being reduced.

X. Regulations for attendance upon Parish Poor.

XI. A Register to be established in every District of all licenced Practitioners, Apprentices, &c.

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AND

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